


# Adolescence

## Ages 12-18: Middle/High School

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- Preteens & teenagers want and need to know about social and sexual relationships.
  - Give clear and consistent messages about your values.
  - They should know at this age that sexual relationships bring responsibility.
  - Reinforce that the best way to prevent unwanted pregnancies and STD's is not to have sexual intercourse.
  - Talk about the methods to prevent pregnancies and diseases, including birth control and condoms.
  - Help your child evaluate the risks of sexual behaviors shared by partners (for example: kissing, hugging, touching, and intercourse).
  - Explain that some young people engage in sexual intercourse, but many do not.
  - Sexuality affects our lives in many ways, including spiritually and culturally. Help your child understand your views and values in all these areas.
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- Encourage positive self-esteem. Children with confidence and goals for the future make healthier decisions.
  - As a parent, know where to get resources in your community for health and social services.
  - Remind your teenager often that you are there for them.